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FOR ACTION

RECOMMENDATION FOR SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING FOR A PROGRAMME IN THE AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN REGION WITHOUT A RECOMMENDATION FOR FUNDING FROM GENERAL RESOURCES**

SUMMARY

The present document contains a recommendation for supplementary funding for a subregional programme for which no recommendation for funding from general resources is requested. The programme proposal submitted here is aimed at expanding or complementing ongoing programmes in the region. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve supplementary funding in the amount of $43,000,000 for the subregional programme for the Andean region (Programa de la region Andina)(PROANDES) for the period 1998-2002, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions.

* E/ICEF/1997/20.

** The figures in the present document are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 1996. They will be contained in the "Summary of 1997 recommendations for general resources and supplementary funding programmes" (E/ICEF/1997/P/L.18).

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Previous programme cooperation, 1988-1997

1. The Andean subregional basic services programme against poverty (Programa de la region Andina (PROANDES)) was originally approved by the Executive Board in 1988 for the period 1988-1992, at the request of the Governments of the subregion, to help them address the most critical manifestations of poverty among children and women of indigenous, Afro-Latin and mestizo families, generally living in remote rural areas. Phase II was approved in 1992 for the period 1993-1997. Operating as a complement to country programmes and incorporating an increasingly important subregional element, it focused on education (especially bilingual and intercultural education), water supply and sanitation, health and hygiene activities, food security and income-generating activities. Phase II was funded by contributions from the Spanish Committee for UNICEF, the Governments of Belgium, Canada and Sweden and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB).

2. The subregional approach has been based on: (a) attacking such common problems as discrimination, limited ability to exercise citizenship and inadequate social service delivery; (b) using such common opportunities as increasing decentralization, democratization and new openness to local participation; and (c) fostering greater impact of projects through systematic exchange of information and experiences within the subregion. Working together within PROANDES, Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations have committed themselves to bringing previously isolated populations into the mainstream of development.

Lessons learned

3. To close the gap perceived between resolution of basic needs and communities' rights to full participation in diagnosing, demanding and securing access to basic social services (i.e., empowerment), service delivery must be part of a mix of strategies, along with advocacy and community capacity-building and mobilization. Working through a multi-sectoral approach within the framework of child rights, PROANDES has helped to develop a framework within which Governments and NGOs may address the needs of rural Andean children and women.

4. Strengthening local governments' management skills and community empowerment as part of decentralization provides a basis for sustainable impact. Water projects are the main entry point. The incorporation of traditional culture and values into projects eases acceptance and improves efficiency while helping to preserve identity and promote self-esteem and self-confidence. Basic rural education, with intercultural and bilingual methodologies as key elements, provides a basis for empowerment. Productive activities, income generation, microcredit and transfer of appropriate technology provide an essential link for sustainable development.

5. Parts of the programme were evaluated by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) (in Bolivia in 1994) and IADB (in 1996), with substantially favourable results. Although the SIDA evaluation pointed out a weakness in sanitation and hygiene education, this element already has been reinforced in Bolivia and several other countries and will be an integral part of the next phase of programming. A study of Andean rural poverty conducted by UNICEF has shown that despite serious limitations of data, the most marginalized communities were already minimally incorporated into the market system, and when structural adjustment was introduced they converted back to a subsistence economy.

The situation of children and women

6. Infant and under-five mortality in poor rural communities remain higher than national averages and gaps appear to be widening. Increasing migration, connected to poverty, as well as lack of opportunity, limited access to credit and markets and limited food resources are reported in many poor provinces in the subregion. School curricula often remain irrelevant to rural conditions, and despite efforts to introduce changes, high rates of teacher turnover, low-quality materials, weak infrastructures and inadequate teacher training continue to affect the quality of education. Maternal mortality rates in rural Andean communities are among the highest in the world; in 1994, the estimated rate among rural Altiplano women in Bolivia was 929 per 100,000 live births, more than double the national rate of 399 and similar to the worst rates in Africa and Asia. Poor rural women are often victims of violence and have limited access to land, credit or control over family expenditure. Rural families tend to place low value on educating girls, which is directly linked to the low status of women. Child labour, especially in agriculture, continues to be a significant problem. Lack of access to potable water is linked to the high incidence of diarrhoea and child malnutrition; in rural areas of Colombia, for example, only 10 per cent of households have access to safe water. Sanitation access and hygiene practices are very limited in remote, rural communities and water collection is time-consuming for rural women. While services exist, poor quality and care often discourage their use.

7. However, legislative changes, increasing democratization, decentralization of basic services, awareness of the specific needs of and discrimination against minorities, allocation of budgetary resources to rural municipalities and the emergence of new pressure groups and organizations all indicate a change in the climate for development. The third phase of PROANDES is being proposed to take advantage of this change, and to build on past successes.

Proposed programme cooperation, 1998-2002

8. The overall objectives of phase III of PROANDES are to: (a) promote the rights of children and women in situations of greatest poverty; (b) ensure sustainablility of achievements to date; (c) extend coverage in the poorest areas, especially to indigenous and Afro-Latin inhabitants; and (d) contribute to overcoming ethnic and gender inequities and protecting the environment. Specific objectives at country level are to: (a) strengthen local participatory decision-making, planning, implementation and management, focusing on women; (b) improve health conditions, nutrition and protection of children and women; (c) reduce maternal mortality and improve reproductive health; (d) expand water provision, sanitation and hygiene education; (e) continue to promote intercultural, bilingual basic education using non-formal alternatives to broaden access, especially for girls; and (f) improve food security through income-generating activities. Each country will stress communities' development of their own priorities, based on strategic alliances with NGOs, local leaders and pertinent national and international institutions.

9. A subregional component will provide added value through: (a) advocacy and representation with regional and multilateral organizations; (b) regional advisory services; (c) collection and analysis of data and systematization and dissemination of best practices; (d) helping to devise a common framework for monitoring and evaluation; and (e) resource mobilization.

10. Operating within this framework, the country-level components of PROANDES reflect the specific situation of each country. Bolivia will work in maternal and child health (MCH); water, sanitation and rural hygiene; primary education; child development; empowerment of rural women; household food security; and microcredit. Colombia will work to strengthen local management capacity, promote community participation and support partnerships in planning and provision of basic services. Ecuador will focus on projects in basic education, water and sanitation, health and nutrition and social policy. Peru will consolidate successful experiences in MCH, child nutrition, water and sanitation, basic rural education, income generation for women and community self-governance. Venezuela will support local development and provision of integrated basic services through the strengthening of community organization and action, public management and intersectoral projects.

Programme strategy

11. The programme, an integral part of government and country programmes, will provide additional focus on the poorest communities through a mix of strategies including service delivery, advocacy and community capacity-building and mobilization. PROANDES will prioritize actions to ensure equity, access and quality of services in areas where impoverished and marginalized rural populations are concentrated, particularly in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. In response to demands arising from community development processes, and by agreement with national and local governments, service delivery agencies, communities and NGOs, each UNICEF country office will structure programme activities in the areas of child protection, water and sanitation, household food security, basic education, health and/or nutrition.

Administrative structure and funding

12. Each country office will have a PROANDES focal point and there will be a subregional coordination mechanism at the Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean. Coordination mechanisms with other United Nations agencies will be maintained by country offices and cooperation will be sought with regional institutions, social investment funds and national and international NGOs. In addition to pledges from the Spanish Committee for UNICEF and the Swedish Government, national Governments and local communities will provide counterpart funding.

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total
Bolivia	3 000	3 000	3 000	3 000	3 000	15 000
Colombia	900	900	900	900	900	4 500
Ecuador	1 200	1 200	1 200	1 200	1 200	6 000
Peru	3 250	3 250	3 250	3 250	2 250	15 250
Venezuela	250	250	300	250	200	1 250
Subregion	200	200	200	200	200	1 000
Total	8 800	8 800	8 850	8 800	7 750	43 000